

BOARD OF REGENTS FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



Enclosure 2
November 1, 2012

Meeting

RIDE

Thursday, October 18, 2012
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Attending: George Caruolo (chairman), Carolina Bernal, Colleen Callahan, Robert Carothers, Karin Forbes, Patrick Guida, Mat Santos, Betsy Shimberg

Absent: Lorne Adrain

Mat Santos joined the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

The meeting convened at 11:35 a.m.

Chairman Caruolo welcomed everyone and asked for a motion to accept the agenda.

Acceptance of Agenda

On a motion duly made by Regent Guida and seconded by Regent Callahan, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education accept the day's agenda.

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: G. Caruolo, C. Bernal, C. Callahan, R. Carothers, K. Forbes, P. Guida, B. Shimberg

NAYS: 0

Regent Santos joined the meeting after the approval of the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion duly made by Regent Callahan and seconded by Regent Forbes, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the September 20, 2012, Board of Regents Meeting and the September 20, 2012, Board of Regents Executive Session.

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative, as follows:

YEAS: G. Caruolo, C. Bernal, C. Callahan, R. Carothers, K. Forbes, P. Guida, B. Shimberg

NAYS: 0

Regent Santos joined the meeting after the approval of the minutes.

Commissioner's Report

In Commissioner Gist's absence, Acting Commissioner David Abbott gave an update on the following:

Certification Tests

Acting Commissioner Abbott began by bringing the Regents up to speed on the battery of certification tests that they had approved back in June, which included the certification areas of Latin, Theatre, School Counselor, and Superintendent.

To ensure that certification tests are current and are based on the most recent national standards, the Educational Testing Service (ETS), the developer of the certification tests, reviews and revises all of their certification tests on an ongoing basis. At the time that the Regents approved the last battery of tests, the test revision process for those four areas had not been completed by ETS until after the public-comment period for the certification regulations. Those four areas are now ready to be updated to reflect the revised tests, so RIDE will be asking the BOR to approve the cut scores for those tests at its November meeting.

In addition to those four areas, RIDE would also like to update the status of one of the new certification types that was approved by the Regents as part of the new certification regulations, called the Temporary Initial Educator Certificate.

This certificate allows an educator who moves to R.I. and has met all certification requirements, except the R.I. certification tests, to gain certification for one year while they complete the tests.

This certificate was scheduled to go into effect on January 1, 2015, but due to a significant demand from the field, RIDE believes it can implement this as soon as 2013.

Events attended by the Acting Commissioner

Acting Commissioner Abbott reported that last week he had a fun week, which included attending a pizza party for current 5th-grade students at the [Robert F. Kennedy] School who outperformed the entire Providence School District as well as exceeded the state average on the NECAP in both mathematics and English language arts the previous school year.

He also attended a celebration honoring this year's winner of the Milken Educator Award, Yanaiza Gallant, a Reading Intervention Specialist at the Lillian Feinstein at Sackett Elementary School, in Providence.

As part of the Providence Journal's "Public Occurrences" series on workforce development, he also joined Higher Education Commissioner Ray DiPasquale and several others in a panel discussion on closing the skills gap. The discussion touched on many issues, including the new career-technical regulations, building a seamless K-14 system pipeline to provide more advanced career preparation, and the concern about both the skills gap among high-school graduates and the jobs gap that affects the overall economy.

Governor's Workforce Board

The panel discussion on closing the skills gap was a great segue to another meeting he attended that week, the Governor's Workforce Board (GWB), at which RIDE has a seat at the table. The GWB is required to present a bi-annual strategic plan to the General Assembly in which the four priorities are employer relationships, work readiness, career pathways and consolidation, and building the accountability around the public workforce system. Things seem to be moving in the right direction; however, there still seems to be some disagreement about how you bring accountability when you talk about multiple agencies, community-based agencies, and not-for-profit organizations. It is a big, unwieldy system that will get caught up in the conversation of the consolidation of the boards [Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Governors for Higher Education].

Charter Public School Updates

RIDE has received the two prospectuses from Providence for its two proposed in-district charters, for which full applications are due to RIDE by December 1, 2012.

The Highlander Charter School is looking for Regents' approval to expand to high school. The school has had a number of accomplishments over the past two years, including high levels of student growth and closing achievement gaps among student sub-populations, and it is classified as a leading school.

Public Remarks

Deborah Perry – Executive Director of YWCA-RI – Sponsor of the Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Academy Charter School - Spoke in support of the application.

Robert Pilkington – Spoke in support of the Village Green Virtual Charter School application.

Rose Mary Grant – Head of the Highlander Charter School – Spoke in support of the school's proposed request for expansion from K-8 to PK-12.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Caruolo gave an update on the public outreach by both the BOR and RIDE for volunteers for the Boards of Trustees at the state-operated schools. Although RIDE received an overwhelming number of responses, he urged the Regents and those in attendance to continue reaching out to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to fill the two remaining positions on the School for the Deaf Board of Trustees, which have statutory conditions. Because it has been difficult to fill those spots, there may be a need to ask the legislature to change the statute.

Discussion Item

GED Regulations

Acting Commissioner Abbott asked Sharon Lee, Director of the Office of Multiple Pathways, and Philip Less, Coordinator for Adult Education, to join him at the table to go over the draft of the proposed GED regulations.

Most of the proposed changes are primarily technical in nature due in no small part to the changes in the national testing protocols. The new GED tests will be taken on a computer, but the GED test is not available online; it is available only at approved GED Testing Centers.

There were questions regarding the affordability of the tests and retakes, which will be slightly more costly than on the current tests, and the elimination of waivers for people on public assistance. The fees are set by the national GED Testing Center, which has recently merged with the private company, Pearson Review, so RIDE has no control over those fees.

States do have the ability to provide either a voucher to assist test-takers or, on the opposite end, to charge higher fees.

Chairman Caruolo inquired as to whether or not the state could devise its own test, but the answer is that it would be too expensive. He suggested reaching out to everyone and every group that professes to be concerned and motivated about the state of education, the state of the job market, and the economy in R.I. to tell them that this would be an absolute worthwhile and admirable use of charitable dollars, aimed at helping not only the person willing to take the test but also the society at large.

There was also discussion around the rigor of the new tests, which will now be aligned with the Common Core standards, and how that will affect the pass rates. Chairman Caruolo asked for a five-year trend showing how many people take GED tests around the state, where those tests are being taken, and the waiting list at GED preparation programs.

The Chairman also questioned the added mandate in the new regulations requiring test-takers to take a practice pre-test at an additional cost. He also questioned the added financial burden on the school districts and testing centers as the state transitions to the new GED computer-based tests and the new PARCC assessment.

Expansion of the R.I. Civics Standards to include Social Studies and Geography

Phyllis Lynch, Director of the Office Instruction, Assessment and Curriculum, and Kamlyn Keith joined Acting Commissioner Abbott at the table to go over the expansion of the current R.I. Civics Standards, which are currently out for public review.

RIDE has developed two new strands of Grade Span Expectations (GSEs) in economics and geography to add to the current GSEs for Civics and Government and Historical Perspectives/R.I. History.

The new strands were developed by a team of R.I. teachers based on existing state and national content standards, and they were expanded to meet the need for comprehensive social studies standards to support LEA development of guaranteed and viable standards-based curricula in the social studies.

Update on Charter Schools

Andrea Castañeda, Chief of the Division of Accelerating School Performance; Sharon Lee, Director of the Office of Multiple Pathways; and Bill Clark, Charter School Coordinator, joined Acting Commissioner Abbott at the table to update the BOR on pending Charter School applications.

RIDE has completed six public hearings to gather feedback on the applications for the Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy and the Village Green Virtual Charter High School. The applications have also gone through the RIDE panel review and are now at the stage of preliminary approval, which gives them the "green light" to continue working toward a final approval by the BOR.

Since these two charter schools are not "traditional" models and there isn't much data available, the BOR asked whether RIDE could gather information about other similar schools across the country, what student populations they serve, and what results those schools have been achieving.

Chairman Caruolo questioned why we would make a serious investment in that many students to start off with, given that this is an experimental program and one that is cutting edge across America.

Acting Commissioner Abbott suggested RIDE bring back to the table the issue of tightness of the model against existing evidence and Chairman Caruolo's concern with scaling and the request to go full scale.

Approval Items

Approval of the proposed GED Regulations for the purpose of public comment

On a motion duly made by Regent Shimberg and seconded by Regent Forbes, it was

VOTED:	That	the Rhode Island Board of Regents for elementary and Secondary Education approves the proposed GED Regulations for the purpose of public comment, as presented.
	Vote:	8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:
	YEAS:	G. Caruolo, C. Bernal, C. Callahan, R. Carothers, K. Forbes, P. Guida, M. Santos, B. Shimberg
	NAYS:	0

Approval of the Regents' FY 2013 and FY 2014 Revised Budget Proposals

On a motion duly made by Regent Shimberg and seconded by Regent Carothers, it was

VOTED:	That	the Rhode Island Board of Regents for elementary and Secondary Education approves and transmits the Regents' FY 2013 revised and FY 2014 budget proposals, as presented.
	Vote:	8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:
	YEAS:	G. Caruolo, C. Bernal, C. Callahan, R. Carothers, K. Forbes,

P. Guida, M. Santos, B. Shimberg

NAYS: 0

Approval of appointments to the William M. Davies, Jr. Career and Technical High School Board of Trustees

On a motion duly made by Regent Santos and seconded by Regent Bernal, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Board of Regents for elementary and Secondary Education approves the appointments of Mr. James Bone and Mr. Andrew Alleyne Otis Brown as Trustees to the William M. Davies, Jr. Career and Technical High School, as presented.

Vote: 8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: G. Caruolo, C. Bernal, C. Callahan, R. Carothers, K. Forbes, P. Guida, M. Santos, B. Shimberg

NAYS: 0

On a motion duly made by Regent Guida and seconded by Regent Carothers, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting.

Vote: 8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: G. Caruolo, C. Bernal, C. Callahan, R. Carothers, K. Forbes, P. Guida, M. Santos, B. Shimberg

NAYS: 0

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.